

# Open minutes of a meeting of the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group for Oxford City Council Companies

on Thursday 27 April 2023

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## **SJVG members:**

Councillor Brown (Chair)	Councillor Munkonge
Councillor Hollingsworth	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Linda Smith	Councillor Upton
Councillor Railton	

## **Officers representing the Council and/or supporting the Shareholder:**

Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services  
Marcia Ecclestone, Legal Services Manager  
Caroline Green, Chief Executive  
Lucy Brown, Committee and Member Services Officer

## **Company Directors and support staff present for all or part of the meeting (see individual minutes for details):**

Tim Sadler, Non-Executive Director, Oxford Direct Services  
Catherine Pridham, Non-Executive Director, Oxford Direct Services  
Michael Whitwell, Non-Executive Director, Oxford Direct Services  
Gregor Budde, Finance Director, ODS  
Dave Curtis, Chief Commercial Officer, Oxford Direct Services Limited  
Anne-Marie Scott, People and Corporate Services Director, Oxford Direct Services Limited  
Tom Hook, Non-Executive Director, Oxford Direct Services

## **Guests present (members of the Companies Scrutiny Panel)**

Councillor James Fry, Companies Scrutiny Panel  
Councillor Alistair Morris, Companies Scrutiny Panel  
Councillor Katherine Miles, Companies Scrutiny Panel

## **Apologies:**

Councillors Turner and Rowley sent apologies.

Simon Howick, Managing Director, ODS Group sent apologies.

## **Minutes**

### **38. Declarations of interest**

None received.

### **39. Scrutiny comments and/or recommendations**

Cllrs Fry, Miles and Morris were present to present the Companies Scrutiny Panel and questions and issues identified were taken as part of the discussion under the individual agenda items.

### **40. Oxford Direct Services Ltd and Oxford Direct Services Trading Limited: External Auditor Appointment 2022/23 [public]**

The Head of Financial Services presented the report which sought approval to appoint Mazars LLP as external auditor for the 2022/23 financial statements of Oxford Direct Services Ltd and Oxford Direct Services Trading Ltd.

He updated the SJVG on the current position in respect of 2021/22, the current state of the audit market, and the increase in audit requirements. He advised that the current contract was let to a single auditor for them to provide the audit for all of these companies, due to both the complex inter-company relationships which are best dealt with on a consistent bases by one auditor and also to enable Council officers to have one point of contact and one process through which to manage the audit. He confirmed that the appointment of the external auditor for the 2023/24 accounts would go out to tender.

#### **The SJVG resolved to:**

1. **Note** the current position in respect of 2021/22, the current state of the audit market, and the increase in audit requirements.
2. **Approve** the appointment of Mazars LLP as external auditor for the 2022/23 financial statements.

### **41. SJVG Confidentiality and private session**

The SJVG passed a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the press and members of the public on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

*Cllr Chapman joined the meeting.*

## **42. Commentary on the ODS to Shareholder from the Head of Financial Services [private]**

The SJVG received a report from the Head of Financial Services which provided an update on three distinct areas:

- The 2021-22 Outturn
- 2022-23 budget monitoring update
- Achievement of the 2023-24 Business Plan.

The SJVG discussed the report in private session. Members of the Companies Scrutiny Panel contributed questions and comments.

The SJVG noted the contents of the report.

*Cllr Fry joined the meeting.*

## **43. Oxford Direct Services Ltd and Oxford Direct Services Trading Limited**

### **Present for this part of the meeting:**

Tim Sadler (Chair of ODSL/ODSTL)

Michael Whitwell (Non-Executive Director)

Catherine Pridham (Non-Executive Director)

Tom Hook (Non-Executive Director)

Gregor Budde (Finance Director)

Anne-Marie Scott (People and Corporate Services Director)

Dave Curtis (Chief Commercial Officer)

## **44. ODS Group Performance Report [private]**

The SJVG received a report which provided an update on the ODS Group performance for 2022/23 and the 2021/22 close of accounts.

The SJVG discussed the report in private session and members of the Companies Scrutiny Panel contributed questions and comments.

### **The SJVG resolved to:**

1. **Note** the 2021/22 close of accounts update and steps being taken to support the timely conclusion of 2022/23 accounts.
2. **Note** the timeframe for contribution of ODS Group net profit after tax for 2022/23.
3. **Note** progress supporting delivery of the Business Plan.
4. **Note** progress made towards the acquisition of a target business.
5. **Ratify** payment of £500 (pro-rata) to ODS staff consolidated into pay with effect from February 2023.
6. **Note** the group principal risks and mitigations.
7. **Note** the update regarding new pay deal discussions.
8. **Note** the ODS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Plan.

**45. Minutes of the previous meeting [part private]**

The SJVG agreed to approve the open and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 08 December 2022 as a true and accurate record.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.20 pm**

**Chair:** .....

**Date:**

**Note: the next meeting is on Wednesday 27 July 2023**